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October 3, 2014

## A Highlight of Departmental Activities

*The Weekly Report showcases the activities and accomplishments of the many Departments within Rutherford County Government. Click on the Directory list, department headings, icons and text in blue to be linked to more information.*

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### [Airport](#)

The Airport had all of its fire extinguishers inspected and recertified this week. The U.S. Air Force, in conjunction with the Civil Air Patrol, has chosen the Rutherford Airport to conduct radio communication exercises in the event of major threats, emergencies and relief efforts, search and rescue, and natural disasters. Rutherford County was chosen, primarily, for its location, half-way between major surrounding cities such as Asheville, Charlotte, Greenville/Spartanburg and Hickory. They have been utilizing our airport for practice drills, communications and testing radio equipment. Also, the airport ordered two full loads of fuel, both Jet-A and 100-LL.

### [Board of Elections](#)

The Board of Elections learned on Wednesday, October 1<sup>st</sup>, that the Fourth Circuit issued an opinion that blocked two changes in election law enacted this year. The opinion reinstated Same Day registration at One-Stop Early voting and also allowed provisional ballots cast in the wrong precinct to be counted if the voter was otherwise eligible to vote. The State is expected to appeal this decision to the Supreme Court, however, until this is settled we are at a standstill on some of our election preparations.

We have almost completed our list of election workers for November and have 25 student workers signed up from the high schools. The Director has attended meetings regarding the potential move of our offices and has been reviewing the training videos with professors and students at Isothermal. A registration drive was held at Isothermal Community College on Wednesday.

Please remember that next Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup> is the last day to register or make changes to your registration for voting on November 4<sup>th</sup>. To verify that your voter registration information is correct click here:

[https://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/voter\\_search/](https://www.ncsbe.gov/webapps/voter_search/)

### Clerk to the Board

During this week, the Clerk to the Board prepared the agenda for the special meeting held on October 2, the special meeting to be held on October 6, and the regular meeting on October 6.

On Tuesday, Commissioner Julius Owens attended the Agriculture Extension Advisory Committee meeting. On Wednesday, he attended the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' Agriculture Steering Committee in Raleigh.

Chairman Eckler attended the Isothermal Rural Planning Organization at Isothermal Planning and Development Commission.

The County Commissioners met on Thursday evening for their monthly agenda review.

Commissioners and staff attended the Conservation Field Day at RS Central on Friday.

### County Manager

The County Manager held his weekly meetings with the department heads from Solid Waste, Public Works and Planning, Economic Development, Finance and the County Attorney.

On Tuesday, he met with the ICC Board of Trustees, participated in a webinar and met with several staff from the Department of Social Services.

Wednesday included a conference call with team members from the Smoky Mountain Center, a meeting with a United Way of Rutherford County representative, a Community Health Council meeting and a meeting with Health Department staff.

On Thursday, he met with Courthouse staff and continued agenda preparation with the Clerk to the Board for the meeting on October 6. The Board of Commissioners and County Manager met for a special meeting, agenda review and goal setting, in the late afternoon.

The week was wrapped up remaining meetings regarding staff reports and finalizing several administrative tasks. The County Manager was also able to visit the Veterans Services fundraiser mid-day as personnel, veterans and volunteers endured the soggy forecast to raise money for Rutherford County's veterans.

### Cooperative Extension

The Family and Consumer Sciences staff met with the Extension Advisory Council; prepared for upcoming Living Healthy with Diabetes workshop series; completed end-of-month reports; submitted monthly news column to Daily Courier; chaired Community Health Council meeting; and prepared for the pie contest at the Farmers Market.



## Economic Development

The Executive Director of the Economic Development Commission met with an existing industry regarding a possible expansion opportunity; continued work on the Gateway West Commerce Park development project; met with the EDC Board Subcommittee; and reviewed grant documentation requesting reimbursement prior to submission to the NC Department of Commerce.

The Project Administrator networked with existing industry via phone calls and email, provided feedback and scheduled upcoming industry visits; forwarded building information to office staff on Forest City Industrial Park buildings; requested updated utility capacity from the Town of Forest City; shared free business seminar put on by NC Rural Center with applicable existing industry; and scheduled the next Business Advancement Team meeting to be held at ICC with Karen Marshall, HRD Director.

The Economic Development Assistant visited with a local industry to review employment requirements for their existing Building Reuse Grant; completed documentation for submission to the NC Department of Commerce for two existing Building Reuse Grants; completed documentation for submission on an IDF grant; worked with the Finance Director to review budget line items; and reviewed documentation provided from the engineer related to the IDF grant for Project Nathan.

The Part-Time Economic Development Assistant finalized the NC Broadband lack of service survey flyer; and continued work on the available buildings vs. prospect requests project and presentation.

**[Take the NC Broadband lack of service survey - it's only 5 questions.](#)**



## Finance

The Finance Director and Assistant Director attended several interdepartmental meetings and worked closely with the Schools to finalize their vehicle replacement plan. The Director and Assistant Director also attended the Commissioners' Meeting Thursday evening. The Assistant Director continues to sell County surplus items through [GovDeals](#). The Finance Office has processed accounts payable and payroll this week.

## Fire Marshal/Emergency Management

The Fire Marshal and Emergency Management Director met with the American Red Cross to discuss their re-organization and their capability of building an additional shelter here; attended an Emergency Management Response Team meeting; assisted citizens with complaints and questions regarding open burning; assisted NC OSHA with a request for information and completed the Annual Relief Fund reports for all fire departments.

## Human Resources

The HR Director held meetings to discuss personnel issues, exit interviews, and retirements. Employees who have left the service of Rutherford County are Joey Sisk (Sheriff), Shelby Pettit (DSS), and Carla English (Detention). The Director had meetings this week with Sherry Lavender, Jeff Buchanan and Angela Ezell. The Director attended a JCPC orientation and monthly meeting. The Director also met with insurance agents and attended the agenda review meeting. Open Enrollment for the State Health Plan began October 1, 2014. A flu vaccination clinic will be held October 14 at the County Office Building.

## Library

**Library Director:** Martha attended the weekly construction meeting for the EMS/Library and she submitted updated quotes from vendors to Danny Searcy. Notices were mailed to the Trustee's for their upcoming quarterly meeting in October. The agenda and quarterly reports are in the works for this meeting.

**Children's Librarian:** Numbers continue to skyrocket in Story Time, with 115 in attendance this week. Next week's theme continues the series on "Forests," by learning about "Bears." Outreach Story Times were in classrooms at The Carver Center.

**Library IT:** Kenneth attended the North Carolina Library Association Fabulous Fridays mini conference in Asheville. Sessions included a presentation by the State Library of North Carolina on the various programs and services they offer to public libraries and citizens around the state; and a workshop on assisting patrons with disabilities who have service animals. Here's some fun trivia...what is the only other animal besides a dog that can be officially trained and certified to be a service animal? Answer: miniature horses! See the bottom of the page located here: [http://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.html](http://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.html).

**Haynes Branch:** The Haynes library has been real busy this week helping Thomas Jefferson High School students find materials and resources for History projects. The Librarian proctored two college students and processed 50 donated paperbacks.

**Mountains Branch:** : Friday, Mountains Library hosted the Hickory Nut Outreach Senior Program. Guest speaker, Dr. Jason Glover, from Rutherford Orthopedics presented very interesting topics pertaining to the older adult and took questions at the end. Lunch was enjoyed by all.

### **Reference Desk:**

Stephanie Long served as a judge for the Book Character Parade which took place on Friday, September 26th, at Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy Grammar School.



DEBRA E. CONNER  
Human Resources Director

BROOKE WATSON  
HR Specialist

**OFFICE OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

**POST FOR ALL FULL TIME EMPLOYEES**

**OPEN SEASON SCHEDULE**

October 1, 2014

To: All Employees

From: Debra Conner, HR Director

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OPEN SEASON is scheduled for the week of October 20-24. Please make all full time employees aware that they must see a Colonial Representative to sign a Cafeteria Plan. Please remember this is an **IRS regulation and is mandatory.**

Open season applies only to your flexible spending accounts and colonial accounts.

Please take the time to ask questions and learn about products available.

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**Locations available:**

County Offices-Monday-Friday October 20, 2014 –October 24, 2014 9:00 am-4:00 pm. THERE WILL BE A REPRESENTATIVE AVAILABLE DURING LUNCH HOURS.

DSS-Monday through Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm.

Sheriff Department-Monday-Friday 5:30 am to 2:00 pm.

Thank you as always for your assistance.

## Public Works and Planning

The Public Works and Planning Department's maintenance team has had an extremely busy week in completing many trackit work orders, preventative maintenance and continued support for the sound system improvements in the courtrooms. As for County vehicles, the garage has completed numerous repairs, tire service calls, preventative maintenance repairs and vehicle safety inspections. The County continues seeking applicants for a mechanic as we make an effort to bring additional preventative maintenance in house. The Planning and Projects team has been extremely busy in moving the Southeastern EMS and Library plans forward stemming from the Commissioners approval to do so last month. In addition, we have continued coordinating with granting agencies for additional funds to improve the Biggerstaff property, the Rail-Trail and the Gilbertowne historical property. Preparation is underway for the upcoming Commissioners' meeting which includes the Community Grants report, progress update on the Biggerstaff Hanging Tree Property and the preparation for the Certification Event Saturday, October 11. Lastly, for the October agenda, is project 12 of the Greyrock bid tab results and recommendations. Meanwhile, we continue coordination with NCDENR to initiate construction of project 2 in Queens Gap.

## Register of Deeds

The Register of Deeds made 7 copies resulting in receipts of \$7 processed 104 real estate records with \$8,028 received, and processed 76 vitals, receiving \$1,060. A total of 187 transactions were made for a total of \$9,095.

## Revenue

The Revenue Department completed 3,590 motor vehicle renewals and handled 57 VTS assists. The office answered 784 phone calls and assisted 305 customers. We completed 1 plat reviews, 0 projects, 1 pre-permit, 0 GIS projects, 0 research projects and answered 3 Data Requests. Appraisers completed 54 building permits and 76 field reviews. A total of 37 new documents were recorded. Transfers consisted of 83 straits, 0 estates, 37 new accounts, 1 merge, 2 splits, and 0 acreage adjustments. GIS created 6 new maps and 0 new data layers. The GIS website had 167,603 hits and 120,007 successful searches. E911 addressing assigned 5 new addresses, 0 new centerlines, ordered 3 new road signs, and updated 99 addresses with new owner information. 0 road names and 0 fire districts changes were made. Part time maintenance workers installed 3 new roads signs and completed maintenance on 10 old ones. No BER or PTC appeals were filed. No listing forms were received, 0 was processed and 0 listing letters went out. The PUV program completed 0 audits, mailed 12 letters, and assisted 11 program members. Staff processed 4 exclusions/deferments and mailed out 0 notice letters. We had 7 refunds, 4 releases and 0 discoveries. Collection enforcement consisted of 1 garnishment, 17 bank attachments, 0 foreclosures, 165 bank drafts, 0 prepays, 318 overpayments, 0 debt setoff, 0 employer lists, 10 newspaper items and 32 notice letters. Staff completed 3 gross receipts, 0 payment plans, processed 667 items mailed in, 5 bankruptcy issues, and 3 bankruptcy payments. In-person taxpayers at the counter brought in 388 tax payments. Department employees spent 0 time on agenda items and release/refund issues. 21 new deeds were certified for recording purposes.



## Senior Center

The Senior Center hosted a special guest on Tuesday. Larry Bailey, Rutherford County Garage Supervisor, came to present a program on “Getting Your Car Ready for Winter”. He discussed basic car maintenance and what steps and procedures are needed to get your car ready for the winter season. To start **National Breast Cancer Awareness Month** on the “right foot”, the Center hosted our “**Pink Walk**” on Wednesday morning. The participants received pink ribbons to wear in honor or in memory of someone special. On Thursday morning, Blake Willard, Licensed Esthetician, came to the Center for a special presentation on the importance of taking proper care of our skin. Also, the Senior Center co-sponsored the Candidate Forum with the Rutherford County 4-H Council and United Way Youth Council on Thursday evening at 6:00 p.m. All parties for the following offices were invited to attend: County Commissioners, Clerk of Court, Sheriff, District Attorney, and the North Carolina House of Representatives.

### Coming up in October:

- “*Murder in the Magnolia’s*” Play Performance & Fundraiser, Friday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.
- Annual Health Fair, Thursday, October 30<sup>th</sup> 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- The Medicare Annual Open Enrollment Period is October 15 through December 7, and SHIIP, the Seniors’ Health Insurance Information Program, can help Medicare beneficiaries compare plans. The Senior Center has SHIIP counselors that are available to help. Call for an appointment to talk with our trained SHIIP counselors. The main number is 287-6409.

## Newsletter

## Calendar of Events



**Dept. of Social Services**

**Employee of the Quarter**

**Emily Williams**

## Social Services

Social Service's hard launch for the Medicaid implementation in NC FAST is quickly approaching. Managers, supervisors, and staff have been proactive in planning for this to minimize any delays or problems for Medicaid consumers. Staff continue to attend training at the agency, via webinar and weekly update meetings. On Monday, a State representative was at the agency to monitor a sample of Special Assistance records. Special Assistance is a State/County funded program that helps pay for assisted living expenses for eligible citizens. The report was very favorable, and the monitor spoke very highly of our Special Assistance Team. We appreciate all the hard work that they do to ensure that those needing this service are screened correctly and receive the benefits that they are entitled to.

On Tuesday, management and fiscal staff met with the County Manager and Finance Director to discuss the Northwoods case management system project for Family and Children's Services. The bi-monthly management meeting was held on Wednesday.

On Wednesday, Emily Williams was recognized as the Employee of the quarter for the fourth quarter of 2014. She works in the Adult Medicaid Unit under the supervision of Sharon Messer. Emily has been employed with the agency for a year and a half and was recognized, not only for her quality work, but for her positive attitude and strong work ethic.

The Director, Social Work Program Manager, and adult services staff met with Adult Program Representatives from the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS). These reps provide updates and case consultation, and also do record reviews and program monitoring as needed or required by the state.

On Thursday the Director and Social Work Program Manager attended the commissioner's agenda meeting in preparation for next Monday's County Commissioner's Meeting. Our Income Maintenance staff is enjoying pumpkins painted by each of the units to celebrate the onset of Fall.

## Soil and Water

The Soil and Water Admin/Education Specialist broke down the District display from the Ellenboro Fair; continued work to plan Conservation Field Day; worked on the District Contract paperwork; and worked on Farm City Planning notes and meeting notices. The Ag. Cost Share technician met with one landowner on two farms, wrote one conservation plan, gave technical advice and had one contract approved.

## Solid Waste

The Solid Waste landfill served 353 customers, hauled 56 containers from convenience centers, shipped 37 loads to Lenoir, sent out one electronics trailer, three loads of recyclables and had 28 tire customers. The Director had his weekly meeting with the County Manager, met with the Deputy Finance Director on Solid Waste margins and internal meetings with employees. The rest of the staff has been busy performing everyday job duties, while continuing additional work at the central landfill. The water wells were tested this week, too.

The solid waste code enforcement officer reports is as follows:

Open Cases - 9

Closed Cases - 3

Pictures Taken - Yes

Citations Written - 0

Letters Sent - 0

Community Service Reports - 1

Community Service Workers - 6



## Tourism Development Authority

The TDA presented its Annual Report and new Travel Guide at the “Game Changer” event held on Thursday, September 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Game Changer was a huge success with an estimated turn out of almost 500 people.

See <http://www.mcconnellgroup.biz/resources.html> for a video of the evening's speakers, slides of the presentations, the annual report and new online travel guide -- all unveiled that night.

The board met last Thursday and committee member appointments were made. A special called meeting of the board will be held Wednesday, October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 2:00 pm at the Bechtler House in Rutherfordton.

The welcome center welcomed about 600 visitors for the fall last weekend.

## Transportation Services

**EMS** personnel responded to 156 emergency calls and 53 convalescent calls. Director attended the monthly Community Health Council meeting. Staff continue to work through specifics with the architect per the drawings for the Southeast EMS station.

**Transit** drove 10,109 miles, completed 1,165 local trips and 78 out of county trips, transported 242 unduplicated passengers and collected \$15,771 in revenue. The Director and Operations Manager attended the NCDOT conference in Raleigh this week, for the Public Transportation Division. The Director gave a speech regarding the Storehouse Pantry shuttle Transit had initiated. The Director also attended the quarterly RPO meeting.

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***Rain didn't dampen  
these spirits!***



## Veteran Services

The Veterans Services Office had 58 mail-ins, 75 facsimiles, 118 mail-outs, 104 telephone contacts, and 165 veteran contacts.

The Hot Dog Fundraiser on October 3 was a great event, despite the rainy weather. Thanks to everyone who volunteered to help and everyone that came out to support us and the veterans.



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# **Biggerstaff Revolutionary War Site to be Recognized**

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## **Certification Celebration & Commemorative Ceremony**

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### **Date**

October 11, 2014 at 11:00 a.m.

### **Location**

4883 Whitesides Road, Bostic  
Site of the Biggerstaff Hanging Tree

A partnership formed of the National Park Service, the Overmountain Victory Trail Association and Rutherford County has brought us to a very special landmark. The Biggerstaff Old Fields and Long Farmstead are being recognized for their historical and cultural value dating back to the Revolutionary War.

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More information to come

#### ***County Commissioners***

**William Eckler, Chairman**  
**Eddie Holland, Vice Chairman**  
**Greg Lovelace**

**Julius Owens**  
**Roger Richard**

**Carl Classen, County Manager**  
**Hazel S. Haynes, Clerk to the Board**  
**Richard Williams, County Attorney**